

## The Times-Dispatch

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MONDAY, DECEMBER 16, 1912.

## THE FUTURE OF FRANCHISE.

Mayor Atwell signed the light and power franchise on the ground that it is not his province "to override the opinions of the attorneys for the city as to its legality or the judgment of two Councils and the former Mayor as to its policy and terms." Doubtless the Mayor was within his rights to define his function as ministerial and not judicial. But the franchise is still to be tested, both as to its legality and scope in protecting the city and as to its wisdom as embodying a policy of value to the community.

The Times-Dispatch does not believe that the policy of competition will result in the benefits promised or that whatever evils exist at present in the electric service will be so remedied. It does not believe that the franchise is framed in a way likely, to, or even designed to, produce results. Therefore, it will await eagerly the action of the courts if they be invoked, and the working of the company in serving this community. Its sole desire is that the people of Richmond be given the best possible service at the lowest rates consistent therewith. If the promised benefits accrue to the consumer, it will be deeply gratified and prompt to admit that its analysis of a broad public policy was incorrect. If these benefits are not forthcoming, it will deeply regret that two Councils have been misled.

In this connection, we desire to point out that no consumer of light or power has actually appeared before the Council seeking relief from exorbitant rates or poor service. Furthermore, the two subcommittees that gave the most serious and prolonged consideration to the aspects of this question reported adversely.

But the franchise is now a fact. The test of actual application will prove it right or wrong. Let us examine its workings dispassionately to judge of whether Richmond has gained or lost.

## PLAN FOR RAILROAD DISTRICT.

The Times-Dispatch has recently received two letters complaining of the difficulties of access along Fourteenth Street to the Southern Station. The whole region is cluttered with drays and heavy traffic, and most of the walking must be done in the street to avoid hopping over gangplanks for loading wagons, or being crushed by sliding boxes. Our correspondents make the point that this is hard on women and children, and a general detriment to Richmond in giving travelers on the Southern a bad impression. We agree, and we think conditions will be even more intolerable when Mayor's Bridge is opened, if ever. Therefore, why not begin to formulate a comprehensive plan for a new union station, an approach to the bridge, and a means of access to Broad Street, all at once? It might also include a suggestion for utilizing the waste space along the branch bottom. This is all one big downtown railroad and shipping problem. It should be handled as a unit, just as the annexation matter is to be handled as a unit.

One glorious thing about the incoming Administrative Board is that it will leave the Council free for real constructive work for the good of Richmond. No longer will they be harassed by petitions for sidewalk permits and the erection of electric signs. They can commence to work. Why should the Council not appoint, at its January meeting, a real committee to co-operate with the Chamber of Commerce, the railroad, the property owners and the engineering department, to devise a downtown plan?

Three different routes from the bridge to Broad Street have been suggested. A union station has been in the air for years. The use of the waste land in the bottom has been thrashed out and forgotten until it seems new again. Yet the whole thing is one problem. If done piecemeal, it will not be done well. Now is the time to get started on improvements that will soon be absolutely demanded.

## AN EXPERIMENT IN SPELLING.

The business man who rates because he cannot find clerks and stenographers who know how to spell ordinary English words, and talk at the schools for wasting time on Latin instead of on the commercial elements needed for actual business, may find some hints in an article by Professor W. T. Myers on the spelling abilities of a freshman class in English at the University of Virginia. He tested seventy-four students representing the average high school graduate of 1912. They were made to write forty-eight words selected from those common words most frequently misspelled in the compositions handed in by the class. The result was startling.

"Rhythm" was misspelled fifty-five times out of seventy-four; "analysis," "occurrence" and "privilege" thirty-one times each; good old "judgment,"

twenty-nine; "its," "lose" and "prerequisite," each twenty; "development," "discipline" and "opportunity," each nineteen; "separate" slaughtered a dozen with its elusive "a," and "mirth" mowed down ten. Of the entire list, only two words were spelled correctly by the gallant seventy-four. These were "adopt" and "answer." The spellers averaged just short of eight mistakes apiece, or about one-sixth of the whole list.

It is clear that these words are not rare or difficult. They are used in everyday life. Yet first-year men in the universities cannot spell one-sixth of them. What is the remedy?

Professor Myers suggests that one thing is to give teachers of English smaller classes and more time for personal conference and direction. Spelling and good English generally can only be taught by constant practice, with constant correction of mistakes. If the teacher has no time for the revision of ample written work, he cannot change the spelling habits of the pupil.

Furthermore, statistics gathered by the Latin teachers of the above group seem to show conclusively that the study of this language is a marked benefit to English spelling. In one section of thirty-one students, the four-year Latin students averaged only 4.5 misspellings, or scarcely more than half of the general average of 8. Three-year Latin students averaged over 11; two-year, over 11; one-year, just 12. The students who had never studied Latin made seventeen mistakes in forty-eight words, an average over double that of the entire class.

This is a practical value of Latin. It helps spelling. Knowledge of the Latin originals of English words prevents the student from making many mistakes. Again, the close scrutiny demanded to fix the multitude of forms in Latin in the mind teaches care and precision in the use of vowels and syllables. Accurate observation of words means better spelling. The business man might ponder on these facts.

## SEATTLE'S LIBRARIES.

No public building in Richmond compares with the Central Library Building in Seattle in point of beauty and impressiveness. The building covers a full city block, it has light and air on all sides, its approaches are splendid in their simplicity and beauty, and, above all, the building meets the needs of the people by putting books in the hands of its citizens. When we consider how woefully lacking Richmond is in the matter of public libraries, and how direct and demonstrable the benefits of reading are, not only for the pleasure, but for the effectiveness of the citizens, it seems hard to explain or justify the delay that Richmond has shown in taking up the question of public libraries.

Abortive efforts have been made time and again to give the citizens of Richmond that access to books which is almost an inalienable right of modern democracy. And to the new campaign to give Richmond a public library The Times-Dispatch offers its hearty good wishes and expresses the hope that those public spirited citizens who have interested themselves in the welfare of all may give Richmond the library that it deserves.

## ADMINISTRATIVE BOARD AND BUILDING INSPECTOR.

The Administrative Board will be on trial in its appointment of a new Building Inspector. This, by necessity, will be among its first official acts, and the people of Richmond will, rightly or wrongly, pass stern judgment on the way the new Board handles this matter. The Board's power of appointment in the city departments is its most important prerogative. By the wise exercise of this power it can render untold service to Richmond. A failure to act wisely and courageously will give the new officials a black eye to start with and impose a handicap on their future success. They must measure up to the responsibility right now. The office of Building Inspector is of profound importance to the growth and safety of Richmond, but even more important is the fact that this appointment will be used by the people as a standard of what they may expect from their experiment in government. It must make good. Therefore, no Administrative Board will ever make an appointment more significant for the future of our municipal life.

The sole tests for the new Building Inspector should be courage and efficiency. He must have technical knowledge, ability and experience to understand the problems presented to him, and he must have the nerve, determination and independence to enforce his decisions. Without knowledge, he will make a fool of himself; without courage, others will make a fool of him. He must have the same quality of dogged perseverance and unflinching stubbornness that have been the essential facts of Mr. Beck's administration. He must be independent of all outside influence and devoted solely to the interests of the people of Richmond, as whose servant he receives a part salary.

The Building Inspector of Richmond can be longer be ignorant. He must be trained in modern methods of construction. It is no longer a question of appointing plans for a small store or a detached residence. It is a question of being able to understand the plans and specifications for skyscrapers and ten-story apartment buildings and meeting the exact from New York or elsewhere with information and experience enough to compel him to conform to Richmond laws and guarantee safe and reliable construction for Richmond use. No more contractors or politicians can fill this place.

It is not a question of providing anybody with a spurious. It is a question of getting the best man available to insure that complicated construction be properly done and to safeguard the property and life of our people.

The Times-Dispatch wants the best man, and at present it believes Mr. Wright, the deputy indicated by Mr. Beck for his successor, is the best man. Mr. Beck's recommendation itself should carry great weight. Mr. Wright's abilities and training make him a logical candidate. But if a better man can be hired, let the Board seek him out and appoint him. It is the Board's duty to get the right incumbent.

It is declared that some members of the Board oppose this appointment on the ground that Mr. Beck is usurping their powers and trying to dictate his successor. If the new Board ever acts on this petty, mean and short-sighted policy, it is doomed. If jealousy, small pride, personal feeling and private desire are the guides the Board expects to follow, it will follow them to destruction. Richmond is tired of two-by-four statesmen and peanut politics. It wants to cut out personal government. It wants to abolish the Aunt Polly and Brother Bill theory of appointment. This is a city, not a village. It expects men, not stuffed shirts, for representatives. It needs a Board that will take Mr. Beck's suggestion, or anybody else's suggestion, and consider it for what it is worth and then act for the good of Richmond. It wants a permanent standard of efficiency, and not of political influence or private snap.

## THE GLORY OF CORN CHAMPION.

That seventeen-year-old boy, Frank Brockman, who raised 167 bushels of corn on a single acre of Amherst land and had his picture in yesterday's Times-Dispatch seated on top of a corn Gibraltar that seemed to obscure the surrounding country, not to mention five columns of the paper, earned about as real an honor and as enduring a glory as ever comes to a Virginian. He did something for his State with his own hands and brains and spirit, and he did it without injuring a single other soul in the world, and we trust without injuring the land. That sounds like an anti-climax, but if you steal from the land you steal from the people, and do a grave injustice to the next generation, so to keep the land rich is about as important as keeping honest.

The glory of being corn champion is that it means you have played the game fair with Nature, and everything you have won from the soil is rightfully yours. You are not making a middleman's profit, nor getting a rake-off or bit of graft; you are not gambling on a margin, speculating in land, or getting the goat as a trust-magnate. No sweated children bedew honest corn with tears. No smothered miners dig the profit from their darkened souls. You have earned by honest toil and good judgment the fruits of the earth that the Lord intended. The grain is the bounty of Nature, not the dividend of special privilege. Any other boy with the same body and courage and a chance at an acre can do the same. Farming doesn't need a lobby, or a tariff, or a receiver. It gives back every ounce of strength put into it. It may look like a gamble on the weather, but year in and year out, the earth is the only banker that runs a game where the percentage is in favor of the player and not the bank.

This is right high-brow talk for a corn-crib. But it is a right high and noble thing to have multiplied the yield of the land by six or seven. It means much for Virginia to produce good corn and good boys. It means better living for other folks. It means a lower cost of living. It means life more abundantly.

## FACTORIES IN THE CITIES.

At the recent meeting of the National Housing Association in Philadelphia, much valuable information was summarized presented, and a number of significant ideas brought forward, relative to the betterment of living conditions among industrial classes, and the general improvement of urban and industrial centers. One of the most important topics discussed, from the standpoint of Southern cities, centered around a paper read by Dr. John Nolen, of Boston, which advocated the location of new factories in city suburbs and the encouragement of old factories to move out and take their workmen with them for their mutual good. To the observer of housing and living conditions in the industrial communities of the Middle States and New England, the significance of these recommendations are apparent. Wage-earners, through the congestion of population, are housed under the shadow of the mill and factory, and their families are reared in the midst of noise, smoke, dirt and general unsanitary conditions. From the standpoint of the city as a whole, the situation is also highly objectionable. Fortunately, in the course of the industrial expansion of the South, the greater number of manufacturing establishments have through policy of self-interest, been located on the outskirts of cities and towns, leaving the rapid development, which is sure to come during the next few years, this policy should be made obligatory in order that future conditions of urban life may be satisfactory and attractive. Such a policy would obviously be to the mutual advantage of the manufacturers and of the community.

The testimony of a parent in a Maryland case is certainly highly satisfactory. The college athletes have all gotten their letters, but can they combine these with examination answers?

Next money they had nothing that they could sell. A head quicker than a woman with a sweater on. One of the best things about the campaign just closed is that business still stands without hitching.

## On the Spur of the Moment.

By Roy K. Moulton.

From the Hickeyville Clarion.  
Elmer Jones has quit the crayon portrait business and has got a new job canvassing for a little velvet pocket appliance called the Handy Home Companion, which combines the following: corkscrew, lightning rod, corn husker, potato knife, curling iron, corn trimmer, screwdriver, monkey wrench, can opener, looking glass, microscope, typewriter, glass cutter, cash register, nail file, jackplane, tack hammer, pocket knife, lead pencil, tooth brush, cherry splitter, nutmeg grater, tuning fork, fine tooth comb, soldering iron, button hook, dychaser, fountain pen, gimlet rafter faze, key ring, curry comb, skeleton key, flat iron handle, camera, pinking iron, try square, lemon squeezer and potato bag sprayer, and sells for a nickel, a half a dime, or a quarter, the only thing it won't do is to make counterfeit money. Elmer figures that if he sells eighty-five million of them a month he will soon be on Easy Street.

Hank Tumms, who has been ailing for some time, had a diagnosis of physicians on him the other day, and they decided he was suffering from spongy-galls. He had an operation seven years ago, and when the doctors got through and sewed him up they left the sponge inside. Since that time he has been the worst old soak in this man's town.

Constable Ezra Hand has bought a set of brass buttons from Station Agent Renfrew Binks down to the railroad depot and will have them put on his new police uniform. There is some class to Ex. mostly second class. Hod Peters has sent down to the city for a set of Jackscrews to use on his farm. It is not known definite what he is going to do, but it is rumored he is going to try and raise the mortgage.

## How to Be an Aristocrat.

Eat dinner at night.  
Mortgage your house and buy an automobile.  
Let the groceryman and meat dealers wait awhile.  
Borrow money to join a couple of country clubs.

When there is a reception, have garments sent up on approval and wear them to the reception.  
Place your nose at an angle of forty-five degrees when you meet an honest workingman on the street.  
Refer to your car as a "motor" and shun the street cars on all occasions.  
Forget the letter "r" in all of your conversation and cultivate a fondness for grapefruit.

Make a loud noise through the nose when anybody mentions such a plebeian thing as work.

## How to Get Rich Quick.

On eight or ten moving-picture theatres.

Discover a gold mine that pans out \$10,000 to the ton.

Marry a beautiful heiress who cares nothing for money.

Get up a new religion and have all of your followers make over their property to you.

Write a successful drama and have nine companies presenting it at the same time to crowded houses.

Get a tip on Wall Street from J. P. Morgan and borrow \$1,000,000 to play it.

Invent a nonpollutable automobile tire and put a crimp in the rubber trust.

Get a good job on the New York police force and save \$100,000 a year on a \$2,500 salary.

## Voice of the People

Can Nation Claim Monticello?

To the Editor of The Times-Dispatch:  
Sir.—In view of the publicity given to the efforts of Mrs. Martin W. Littleton to acquire Monticello, the home of Mr. Jefferson, against the wishes of its owner, I have been surprised to notice the silence of our newspapers upon the question of the eminent domain of Virginia. It has been stated that the effort will be made to induce the Federal government to institute condemnation proceedings. This suggestion gives rise to a most important question that the individual rights of Mr. Levy, I am aware, of course, of the centralization of power since the War Between the States, but I believe that it is still the view of the courts and constitutional law authorities that the Federal government has no power except what is granted in the Federal Constitution. I can understand how the Federal government has authority to condemn land sufficient for post-office buildings, in view of its granted powers over the mails; but what section of the Constitution gives the government any authority to set aside the sovereignty of Virginia and seize any portion of its territory for the sentimental purposes contemplated by Mrs. Littleton?

At the same time, I am a man of sentiment, and I should like to see Monticello in the possession of our State, but I do not know how even Virginia could exercise her right of eminent domain unless the property was necessary for some general public purpose. LYON G. TYLER.  
Williamsburg, Va., Dec. 11, 1912.

## State in Buckingham.

To the Editor of The Times-Dispatch:  
Sir.—An article in your paper of December 2 leads me to write this notice of a large vein of blue slate that

The heart that offered its blood for our liberty has ceased to beat. The lips that were eloquent in our defense are silent. The arms that did battle for us are motionless; but his deeds embalmed in all that is heroic in action and sublime in Christianity will smell sweet and blossom in the dust. "Nothing need cover his high name but heaven."

No pyramid set up to his memories. But the eternal substance of his greatness. To which I leave him.

Therefore keep the truth before the people. THOMAS H. BOISSEAU.  
Richmond, December 9.

## A Republican on the Pension Stent.

To the Editor of The Times-Dispatch:  
Sir.—Your "Sox in the road" article in the issue just issued leads me to say that to-day's issue is just what the country needs under the name of pensioners. It is a disgraceful waste in paying political debts under the name of pensioners. It is a disgraceful waste in paying political debts under the name of pensioners. It is a disgraceful waste in paying political debts under the name of pensioners.

Forty years ago, while living in a Northern city, I took special pains to investigate as to the claims and need of pensioners, and was shocked at the way our government was wasting its revenues.

The English language is rich beyond measure in words to express one's thoughts, yet, somehow when we stop and consider this pension steal, we involuntarily wish for a few words

## A PICTORIAL SERMONETTE.

The Man Who Had No Right to Talk.

By John T. McCutcheon.

(Copyright, 1912, By John T. McCutcheon.)



AT EIGHT O'CLOCK — "Why, take a night like this, with the thermometer below zero, the suffering among the poor is simply terrible. Somebody ought to take them coal barons out and string 'em up to the nearest lamp-post."



AT ELEVEN O'CLOCK — "I tell you, gentlemen, it's an infamous outrage. Just think of the suffering among the helpless poor. It makes me mad to think of it. I wish I was President for about fifteen minutes — you'd see some of them villains in the coal trust pay for their confounded heartlessness."



AT TWELVE O'CLOCK — "Well, I've got to be going, for I've got a twelve-mile drive and it's bitter cold to-night. I pity the poor people who have no coal on a night like this."

has been found on the farm of Mrs. A. L. M. C. Whelan in Buckingham County, Va. The outcrop of the vein indicates a large deposit of slate. Mrs. Whelan has sent samples of the slate to Professor J. T. Grasty, of the University of Virginia, who pronounced the sample as good. She is looking for Professor Grasty and Mr. J. L. Watson to look into the slate question. The first of the year, when she will take steps to sell the slate to a company who will open it and work it. Some three years ago G. P. Williams went over and examined Mrs. Whelan's Buckingham property, and found good indications of manganese and graphite. She had samples sent to Richmond for analysis, and the ore was said to be good. Mrs. Whelan has been in correspondence with a company in regard to the disposal of it. Some little developing has been done on her property, but not very much. Buckingham is, as your article said, a mineral county, and fortunes could be made out of them if properly worked. Norwood.

## The Anniversary of President Davis's Death.

To the Editor of The Times-Dispatch:  
Sir.—The people of Richmond need no exhortation to do honor to the memory of his virtues and his patriotism have forever enshrined him in their hearts. I would, however, recommend that in furtherance of the suggestion contained in the proclamation of the Governor and in compliance with the resolution of the City Council, that all business be suspended on next Wednesday, the day of the funeral, and that our citizens repair to their respective places of worship and unite in such memorial services as may be most expressive of their grief at the loss of our distinguished President, the four most eventful years of whose illustrious life were spent within our borders.

"I would, as a further mark of respect, order that all the municipal offices be closed on the above day." J. TAYLOR ELLISON.

A copy from memorial volume of Jefferson Davis, page 287.  
THOMAS H. BOISSEAU.  
Room No. 5, Virginia Cottage Soldiers' Home.

The heart that offered its blood for our liberty has ceased to beat. The lips that were eloquent in our defense are silent. The arms that did battle for us are motionless; but his deeds embalmed in all that is heroic in action and sublime in Christianity will smell sweet and blossom in the dust. "Nothing need cover his high name but heaven."

No pyramid set up to his memories. But the eternal substance of his greatness. To which I leave him.

## The T. Va. Trot.

(Time: "Everybody's Doin' It.")  
T. Va. is winning it, winnin' it, winnin' it.  
T. Va. is winning it, winnin' it, winnin' it.  
Watch old Carter rushing through the line, leaving Carolina behind; oh, my Lord, how Charlottesville will shine.  
T. Va. is winning it, winnin' it, winnin' it.  
T. Va. is winnin' it, pinchin' it, cinchin' it.  
T. Va. is leaping it, reaping it, keepin' it.  
T. Va. is dead as a rail.  
See old Tillet turning quite pale.  
Jones like a ship without a sail.  
T. Va. is keeping it now.

Carolina's losin' it, losin' it, losin' it.  
Carolina's losin' it, losin' it, losin' it.  
See those Tarheels up in the air.  
See old Taddy running like a hare.  
See old Gills crossing with a tear.  
It's a bear, it's a bear, it's a scare, there.

T. Va. is winning it, winning it, winnin' it.  
T. Va. is winning it, pinning it, skinning it.  
See Carolina giving up the ghost.  
Watch V-A advancing in a host.  
Drive toward goal with speed that seems absurd.  
T. Va. is winning it now!

Carolina's giving up, giving up, giving up.  
Carolina's giving up, giving up, giving up.  
See that piskin flying like a bird.  
See old Taddy crying like a whorl.  
Rush toward goal with speed that seems absurd.  
Carolina's giving up, giving up, giving up.  
Carolina's giving up, giving up, giving up.  
See those Tarheels crying in despair.  
See them pulling, jerking out their hair.

They're defeated good and fair.  
Carolina's given up now.  
LAURIE COLLINS GREENE.  
Sunny Courthouse.

Telephone MADISON 805 and ask CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

## QUERIES &amp; ANSWERS

The Allens.

So much has been written and said about the Allen case that I should be glad for you to answer this question for me: Supposing that the law under which these persons were condemned is an unwise one, and that the punishment by death is not a judicious one, is it still not true that the best way to get rid of an unwise law is to execute it to the full? R. H. F.

## Generals.

How many full generals has the United States Army had, and who were they? LEANBRY GAY.  
The fact that probably all our generals have occasionally been "full" along with most of the colonels and majors and captains, etc., Grant was appointed general by act of July 25, 1866, and served till his election to the presidency. Sherman was appointed general by act of February 8, 1868. Sheridan was appointed general by act of June 1, 1888, and served till his death. August 2, 1888. Since then the grade of "general" has not been revived.

## Chinese Wall and Pilgrims.

China, tell me when the Great Wall of China was built, and for what and its height and length.

2. Where did the "Pilgrim Fathers" come from: where did they land, in what year did they reach America? W. H. G.

(1) The wall was built about 200 years B. C. as a defense of the empire against the Tartars. It is about 1,200 miles long, some twenty-five feet thick at the base and twenty feet high.

(2) The "Pilgrim Fathers" came from Leyden. They landed on Cape Cod, and crossed the bay to a point which Captain John Smith some time before had named "Plymouth." December 11, 1620.

## Various.

1. May a convict testify in Virginia?  
2. What was the business of Miss Good, of Hillsville, in court the day of the Allen murders?  
3. What may be done to abolish capital punishment in Virginia? Can women aid in the work?

(1) Not unless his "disabilities" have been removed.  
(2) The members of the State Legislature may be induced to repeal the present laws on the subject. Certainly they may. Women have lately proven of the very highest service to the cause of good legislation.

PUT THIS LABEL ON YOUR GOODS

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